

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing documents, comprising the steps of:

creating a document profile that includes fields of attributes of a document;

generating a unique identifier for the document, the unique identifier including at least a first portion including information descriptive of an attribute of the document and at least a second portion including an automatically generated number; and

storing the document profile for the document.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the first portion is descriptive of the author of the document.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the second portion is a sequentially generated number unique for the first portion.

4. The method of Claim 2 wherein the second portion is a sequentially generated number unique for the first portion.

5. The method of Claim 2 wherein the unique identifier is generated before the document content is entered.

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6. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of selecting a predefined document template for the document during creation of the document profile, the document template defining the format of the document.

7. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of linking the document profile to a file type that is not created within the document management system.

8. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of creating an email message including a link to the document profile so that a recipient of the message can access the document associated with the document profile.

9. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of creating an email message including a copy of the document from within the document management system so that a recipient of the message can access the copy of the document.

10. The method of Claim 1 further including the step of defining user access permission in the document profile, wherein the step of defining user access permission includes the step acquiring the identity of the user from a source external to the document management system.

11. A method for managing documents, comprising the steps of:

creating a document profile that includes fields of attributes of the document;

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selecting a predefined document template for the document during creation of the document profile, the document template defining the format of the document; and

storing the profile for a document before any information is entered into a content of the document.

12. A method for managing documents with a document management system, comprising the steps of:

creating a document profile that includes fields of attributes of a document; and

linking the document profile to a file type that is not created within the document management system.

13. The method of Claim 12 wherein the file type is a word processing document, a spreadsheet document, a database record or a URL link.

14. The method of Claim 12 wherein the file type is an email record.

15. A method for managing documents in a computer implemented document management system, comprising the steps of:

creating a document profile that includes fields of attributes of the document

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storing the document profile; and

creating an email message comprising a link to the document profile so that a recipient of the message can access the document associated with the document profile.

16. The method of Claim 15 wherein the email message comprising a link to the document profile is created from within the document management system.

17. A method for managing documents in a computer implemented document management system, comprising the steps of:

creating a document profile that includes fields of attributes of the document

storing the document profile; and

creating an email message including a copy of the document from within the document management system so that a recipient of the message can access the copy of the document.

18. A method for managing documents using a computer implemented document management system, comprising the steps of:

defining user access permission for a document profile or an associated document content in a profile for a document,

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wherein the step of defining user access permission includes the step acquiring the identity of the user from a source external to the document management system; and

storing the profile for the document.

19. The method of Claim 18 wherein the source of the identity of the user is an operating system security system or a database security system.

20. A method for managing documents comprising the steps of:

creating at least one document profile that includes fields of attributes of an associated document content;

storing the document profile in a database;

storing the document content external to the database in a file system of a first storage device; and

replicating the document content from the first storage device to a second storage device.

21. A computer implemented document management system, the computer including a processing unit a storage device, the document management system comprising:

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a module to create a document profile to be stored in a database in the storage device, the document profile including fields of attributes of an associated document;

a module to generate a unique identifier for the document, the unique identifier comprising at least a first portion comprising information descriptive of an attribute of the document and at least a second portion comprising a number generated by the unique identifier generation module.

22. The document management system of Claim 21 wherein the document profile creation module includes a module to select a predefined document template for the document during creation of the document profile, the document template defining the format of the document.

23. The document management system of Claim 21 wherein the document profile creation module includes a module to link the document profile to a file type that is not created within the document management system.

24. The document management system of Claim 21 further including a module to create an email message having a link to the document profile so that a recipient of the message can access the document associated with the document profile.

25. The document management system of Claim 21 further including a module to create an email message including a copy of the document from within the document

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management system so that a recipient of the message can access the copy of the document.

26. The document management system of Claim 21 further including a module to define user access permission in the document profile by acquiring the identity of the user from a source external to the document management system.

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